

John Coffee to Andrew Jackson, October 22, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOHN COFFEE TO JACKSON.

“ Indian Lands, ” October 22, 1813, “12 OClock.”

Genl. Jackson , Agreeably to your orders, I proceeded, to cross the River at the upper end of the shoals, all my efforts failed to procure a pilot, I took with me one of Meltons sons, who said he knew not the road, he shewed me a path that had been reputed the Black Warriors path.¹ I proceeded on it, in its whole course about 10 degrees East of

¹ Reid tells us that this movement by Coffee was on the upper reaches of the Black Warrior River (see Eaton, *Jackson*, p. 41). The reader must remember that Maj. John Reid, Jackson's efficient aide, began a life of his commander. He had finished four chapters when he died in Jan., 1816. The book was completed by Maj. John H. Eaton.

South, in the early part of the third days march I met Russell who said I was on the right way. at the distance of 80 miles, I crossed a river about 60 yards wide runing to the west, where there is a small deserted Indian Village, which Russel said was the Black Warriors town, being convinced it was not, I proceeded over the River, and at about two miles found a cross path leading nearly west, but not in late use, I turned on that path west, and at 13 miles distance come to a small Indian village. corn in the fields but no person to be found got about 100. bushels corn, burnt the houses, and proceeded eight miles further, come to the main Black Warriors town abandoned by the Inhabitants found some corn in the fields and some old corn in cribbs, fresh fish of One or two Indians, and no other signs—got in the whole about 300. bushels corn, burnt their town or counsel house and about 50 other buildings this town is supposed to be the principal one of the tribe and the lowest down

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the river, (I am certain its not the nearest to the Shoals) and seeing that the Indians had fled I deemed it not adviseable to go further in search of villages where no other Spoil can be had than such as we have found, and having no pilot or even any one that ever had been in the country with me am uninformed if any more are in this quarter, having been two days out of rations the most of the men living on parched corn, I have determined to meet your army the nearest possible—am now on a path that Russel went out and he says about 30 miles from Dick Browns. have sent on to you the bearer, and must beg that you will order provisions put in a state of readiness for my men when we come up with you—have not heard of you since I left—suppose you will be in advance of Browns, if so we follow on, otherwise will meet you.

Very respectfully your obt. Sert